

CLAIMS

1. A method for inhibiting the moisture variation in a composition, characterized in that it comprises a step of incorporating
5 a saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose into said composition.

2. The method of claim 1, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is composed of any of mono-glucose, di-glucose, tri-glucose, and tetra-glucose bound to at least one of glucose residues of α,α -trehalose molecule.

10 3. The method of claim 1 or 2, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is a saccharide having a trehalose structure as an end unit.

4. The method of any one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is in an
15 amorphous form.

5. The method of any one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in thatwhereinsaid saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is incorporated into said composition in combination with another saccharide.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said another saccharide
20 is one or more members selected from the group consisting of reducing saccharides, non-reducing saccharides, sugar alcohols, and water-soluble polysaccharides.

7. The method of any one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in thatwhereinsaid saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is incorporated
25 in an amount of at least one percent to the total weight of said composition, on a dry solid basis.

8. A composition obtainable by the method of any one of claims 1 to 7.

9. The composition of claim 8, characterized in that said composition is in the form of a member selected from the group consisting of food products, cosmetics, medicated cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, daily goods, feeds, pet foods, baits, groceries, and chemical industrial products.

10. The composition of claim 9, characterized in that wherein said food products are members selected from the group consisting of seasonings, creams, jams, pastes, Japanese confectionery, Western confectionery, bread/buns, processed products of meat including fish meat, fishery processed foods, agricultural processed food products, noodles, daily dishes, cooked rice products, frozen-food products, retort pouched food products, chilled food products, dried food products, and freeze-dried food products.

11. The composition of claim 9, characterized in that wherein said food products are members selected from the group consisting of table sugars, dried bonito seasoning extracts, processed products of sea urchin, dried swellfish, dried sardines, dried small sardines, dried young sardines, shucked short-necked clams, boiled octopuses, herrings soaked in vinegar, yellowtails boiled hard with soy, kneaded fish meat paste products, seasoned lavers, powdery seasonings, powdered milk, powdered eggs, powdered vegetable juice, powdered green tea, powdered oil and fat, powdered vitamins, powdered minerals, powdered DHA, powdered peppermint oils, powdered flavors, powdered pigments, powdered ginseng extract, tablets with vegetable juice, vitamin preparations, polished rice, "*musenmai*" (a pre-washed or pre-treated rice with no need for washing with water before cooking), cooked rice, Chinese dish of fried rice, noodles, instant noodles, rice pastes, "*ohagi*" (a kind of rice paste), "*mizu-manju*" (a kind of bun with a bean-jam), "*an*", (a bean-jam), "*monaka*" (a bean-jam-filled wafer), *pao de Castella*, freeze-dough for

bread, bread made from rice flour, "*takoyaki*" (a Japanese-style pancake containing octopus, i.e., octopus dumpling)", fruit gummy, caramel, jelly, fondant, hard candy with a high moisture content, cotton confectionery, Chinese sweet potato, roasted almond, sugar-coated gum, barley water, "*dango-no-tare*" (a seasoning for boiled starch paste), strawberry jam, dried fruit and mixed vegetable, meringue confectionery, chocolate cookie, pie, rice confectionery, "*nure-senbei*" (a baked rice cake coated with sugar-containing paste), pudding, lacto ice, freeze-dried Welsh onion, bean curd, bacon, solution for treating processed meat, processed whole egg liquid, retort pouched curry, "*chawan-mushi*" (a pot-steamed hotchpotch), salad dressing, mayonnaise-like food, cream, custard cream, green-tea syrup, "*matcha*" (a ground green tea) syrup, edible film, and capsule.

12. A moisture variation inhibiting agent, characterized in that it comprises a saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose.

13. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of claim 12, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is a member selected from the group consisting of mono-glucose, di-glucose, tri-glucose and tetra-glucose, each of which is bound to at least one of glucose molecules of α,α -trehalose molecule.

14. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of claim 12 or 13, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is a saccharide having a trehalose structure as an end unit.

15. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 14, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is in a form of amorphous.

16. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims

12 to 15, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of α,α -trehalose is incorporated in combination with another saccharide.

17. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of claim 16, characterized in that wherein said another saccharide is one or more
5 members selected from the group consisting of reducing saccharides, non-reducing saccharides, sugar alcohols, and water-soluble polysaccharides.

18. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 17, characterized in that wherein said saccharide-derivative of
10 α,α -trehalose is incorporated in an amount of at least 10% to the total weight of the agent, on a dry solid basis.

19. A composition obtainable by incorporating the moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18 to a material for said composition.

15 20. The composition of claim 19, characterized in that said composition is in the form of a member selected from the group consisting of food products, cosmetics, medicated cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, daily goods, feeds, pet foods, baits, groceries, and chemical industrial products.

20 21. The composition of claim 20, characterized in that wherein said food product is a member selected from the group consisting of seasonings, creams, jams, pastes, Japanese confectioneries, Western confectioneries, bread, processed fish meat or red meat, fishery processed products, agricultural processed food products, noodles,
25 cooked rice products, daily dishes, "tare" (a kind of seasoning for foods) or the like, freeze-dried food products, retort pouched foods, chilled food products, and dried food products.

22. The composition of claim 20 or 21, characterized in that

wherein said food product is a member selected from the group consisting of table sugars, dried bonito seasoning extracts, processed products of sea urchin, dried swellfish, dried sardines, dried small sardines, dried young sardines, shucked short-necked clams, boiled octopuses, herrings soaked in vinegar, yellowtails boiled hard with soy, kneaded fish meat paste products, seasoned lavers, powdery seasonings, powdered milk, powdered eggs, powdered vegetable juice, powdered green tea, powdered oil and fat, powdered vitamins, powdered minerals, powdered DHA, powdered peppermint oils, powdered flavors, powdered pigments, powdered ginseng extract, tablets with vegetable juice, vitamin preparations, polished rice, pre-washed or pre-treated rice with no need of washing with water, cooked rice, Chinese dish of fried rice, noodles, instant noodles, "ohagi" (a kind of rice paste), rice pastes, "mizu-manju" (a kind of bun with a bean-jam), "an", (a bean-jam), "monaka" (a bean-jam-filled wafer), *pao de Castella*, freeze-dough for bread, bread made from rice flour, "takoyaki" (a Japanese-style pancake containing octopus, i.e., octopus dumpling)", fruit gummy, caramel, jelly, fondant, hard candy with a high moisture content, cotton confectionery, Chinese sweet potato, roasted almond, sugar-coated gum, barley water, "dango-no-tare" (a seasoning for boiled starch paste), strawberry jam, dried fruit and mixed vegetable, meringue confectionery, chocolate cookie, pie, rice confectionery, "nure-senbei" (a baked rice cake coated with sugar-containing paste), pudding, lacto ice, freeze-dried Welsh onion, bean curd, bacon, solution for treating processed meat, processed whole egg liquid, retort pouched curry, "chawan-mushi" (a pot-steamed hotchpotch), salad dressing, mayonnaise-like food, cream, custard cream, green-tea syrup, "matcha" (a ground green tea) syrup, edible film, and capsule.

23. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a substrate for pulverization.

24. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a preventive for binding.

5 25. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a luster-imparting agent.

26. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a gloss-imparting agent.

10 27. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a shape-retaining agent.

28. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as an agent for inhibiting oxidation and/or decomposition of lipids.

15 29. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a denaturation-preventing agent.

30. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a deterioration-preventing agent for flavors.

20 31. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as an agent for preventing color change and/or color fading of pigments.

32. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of claim 31, characterized in that wherein said pigment is chlorophyll.

25 33. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of claim 32, characterized in that wherein said chlorophyll is one contained in green tea or "matcha" (a ground green tea).

34. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a freshness-retaining agent.

35. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a flavor- and taste-retaining agent for food

products.

36. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as an agent for inhibiting metmyoglobin formation and/or blackening.

5 37. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a vitrifying agent.

38. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a substrate for sugar coating.

10 39. The moisture variation inhibiting agent of any one of claims 12 to 18, which is used as a growth-promoting agent for plants.